

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fogelberg.

Fogelberg discloses an anti-rattle system including first and second parts, with one of the parts includes a pair of deformable pressure discs. The other part includes a friction disc with an outer periphery positioned between the parallel flat surfaces of the pair of discs so that they are spread apart by the friction disc.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to recite a gear drive mechanism with an anti-rattle device and includes a first friction disc having a first friction rim surface that is rotationally coupled to the first gear and has a first frusto-conical shape, and a second friction disc having a second friction rim surface that is rotationally coupled to the second gear and has a second frusto-conical shape. The first friction rim surface and the second friction rim surface are in mutual contact with each other and thereby enabled to transmit a friction-based torque between each other. One of the first and second friction rim surfaces is elastically biased against the other friction rim surface which permits the one disc to adapt itself elastically to the shape of the neighboring disk.

Applicant respectfully submits that the above feature, namely an elastic frusto-conically shaped disk, is neither disclosed nor suggested by Fogelberg and provides an arrangement that offers a number of advantages. In particular, the present arrangement and construction of the friction rim surfaces requires more space in the axial direction. One of the drawbacks of the cited reference is that the friction of the outer disk against the inner disk causes wear, and thus, there is not defined transfer ratio between the clamping disks bearing against the outside and the intermediate disk.

As set forth in the amended claims, at least one friction rim surface is in the form of a disk-shaped elastic element. This allows one disk-shaped friction member to interface with the

other disk-shaped friction member in an elastic manner and thereby, the friction rim surface can adapt itself elastically to the shape of the neighboring disk. Such action is not found with the elements that the Examiner has identified in the cited reference as being the claimed friction rim surfaces since these surfaces are *not* elastic surfaces and therefore, lack the claimed elastic bias that results from one friction rim surface being elastically biased against the other friction surface.

Since the Fogelberg reference fails to include at least one feature of amended claim 1, the rejection of claim 1 must be withdrawn. Reconsideration and allowance of amended claim 1 are earnestly solicited.

Claims 2-3 and 5-10 should be allowed as depending from what should now be an allowed independent claim 1, as amended.

Claims 4 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fogelberg.

These claims should be allowed as depending from what should be an allowed independent claim 1, as amended.

New claims 12-13 have been added and should be allowed at least for the same reasons expressed above with reference to why amended claim 1 should be allowed. In addition, claim 12 recites that the first gear has a first retaining feature and the second gear has a second retaining feature, with the first friction disk having a central opening that receives the first retaining feature to rotationally couple the first friction rim surface to the first gear and similarly, the second friction disk has a central opening that receives the second retaining feature to rotationally couple the second friction rim surface to the second gear. One of the first and second friction rim surfaces forms an elastic interface with the other friction rim surface.

Applicant respectfully contends that the above features are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references since the references lack the elastic interface and the retaining means disclosed in the claim.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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